



File Code: 1950
Date: September 30, 2011

Environmental Assessment Illabot Road Project

Dear Interested Party:

The environmental assessment (EA) for the Illabot Road Project and two appendices of the EA are available for comment. The EA and appendices can be downloaded at <http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/fs-usda-pop.php/?project=29892>. The project proposes to decommission 16.07 miles of the Illabot Creek Road (Road 16) and its associated spur roads, upgrade the remaining portion of Road 16 on National Forest System land, and portions of Roads 1620 and 1620.012. The analysis area includes National Forest System Lands in the Illabot watershed, in numerous sections of Township 34 North, Ranges 10 and 11 East.

I invite and encourage your review and comment on this proposal. A 30-day comment period has been established. Please send your written comments to:

Jon Vanderheyden, District Ranger
Mt. Baker Ranger District
810 SR 20
Sedro-Woolley WA 98284

Comments may also be submitted to me via phone, Fax, e-mail, or in person at the above address. The phone number is (360) 854-2601. The Fax number is (360) 856-1934. Electronic comments can be submitted to jvanderheyden@fs.fed.us. Office hours at the Mt. Baker Ranger Station are 8:00 to 4:30, Monday through Friday. You may contact me for more information or if you prefer a paper copy of the EA.

New Notice, Comment, and Appeal Procedures went into effect on June 4, 2003¹ and these may affect your commenting on the Illabot Road Project EA, especially if you would like to be eligible to appeal this project:

- Comments will be accepted for 30 days after the date that legal notification of the comment period appears in the Skagit Valley Herald. Note that there is no extension of the comment period for EAs.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that your comments are timely: delivered, emailed, FAXed, postmarked, or otherwise submitted (for example, express delivery service).
- To remain eligible to appeal, please provide your name and address with your comments, plus a signature (or other verification of identity if requested).²

¹ 36 CFR Part 215.

² If several people submit one letter, all should sign. For organizations, a signature for the individual authorized to represent each organization should be provided.



- Please include the title of the proposed action and specific substantive comments on the proposal, along with supporting reasons that I should consider in reaching a decision.
- Comments received on behalf of an organization are considered as those of the organization only, so individual members of an organization may want to submit their own substantive comments to meet appeal eligibility requirements.
- Electronic comments may be in the form of an email or a document attached to an email, but should include the above information.

The Forest Service preferred alternative at this time is Alternative P. Through the analysis presented in this EA, I have determined that Alternative P is not a major Federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment; therefore, an environmental impact statement is not needed. This determination was made considering the factors of significance, as defined in 40 CFR 1508.27 (Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing ... the National Environmental Policy Act).

All comments received on this proposal will be considered in the final decision. All those who comment on this document during the 30-day comment period will receive a copy of the Decision Notice and associated documents.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who only submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Part 215. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without names and addresses.

Thank you for your interest in our planning efforts on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest and Mt. Baker Ranger District. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

JON VANDERHEYDEN
District Ranger

Enclosures:
Environmental Assessment, Appendix A, and Appendix B.